In this arts workshop we will study vocal technique for actors in a truly interdisciplinary manner using the physical practices of vinyasa yoga and qigong, the voice techniques of Cicely Berry, Chuck Jones and FM Alexander, and readings from various practitioners, philosophers and poets. Every class will fully engage the body, voice and mind, ultimately seeking to unify these three components of the self so that each student can use his or her unique instrument most efficiently and effectively. This course will ask questions such as: What does it mean to “be present” as performers, creators, public speakers and citizens? How can a performer use his/her vocal instrument in the most open and free manner? How do we listen on stage? How can we each be at the center of our own rehearsal process? How do individuals form a collective ensemble? What is mindfulness? Students will explore these questions both intellectually and physically throughout the semester.

Requirements:

This is a physical course; you need not have any previous experience with yoga or performance but you must be willing and able to be physically active. Please let us know about any previous physical or vocal injuries that you are concerned about and please modify accordingly.

You are required to wear appropriate movement clothes and to bring a yoga mat and blanket to every class. You must also bring a notebook and pen to every class.

Course Objectives:

- For each student to gain an understanding of how the body and voice are integrated.
- For each student to gain an understanding of the basic anatomy of breath and vocal production.
- For each student to gain an understanding of how to release his/her individual, natural voice.
• For each student to better understand his/her instrument: the whole body, voice and mind.

**Reading will be taken from:**

Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, translated by Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald
Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, translated by M.D. Herter Norton
Michael McCallion, *The Voice Book*
David Foster Wallace, *This is Water*
Pema Chodron, *Wisdom of no Escape*
Brene Brown, *The Power of Vulnerability*, TED Talk
Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*
Shakespeare, *Henry V*

Additional readings and video clips to watch may be handed out, emailed or posted on NYU Classes.

**Assignments**

Students will be required to complete written assignments outside of class (two essays and approximately 4 journal entries) and are required to rehearse and prepare oral assignments (monologues/speeches/scenes) outside of class. Written assignments may be read out loud in class.

**How class will begin:**

You must arrive early enough to set up and be ready to begin promptly at 2pm. Leave your shoes outside the studio, quietly store your things in a cubby, turn off you phone, on physical practice days set up your mat, blanket and props in order to be ready to begin at 2pm.

**Technology policy:**

Please use paper notebooks during class and not laptops or iPads. Please turn your phones off and do not take them out during class.

**Grading:**

Grades is this class will be based on attendance, attitude, preparation and participation. The goals of the course are 1) to be brave, bold and honest as you seek to open your unique free and open voice and body. 2) to be prepared, rigorous and curious as we examine, discuss and work 3) to be supportive, receptive and, when asked, to give useful, constructive criticism to your peers.
Your grade will be calculated as followed: 25% essays, 25% journal entries, 50% class participation.

*Participation is essential.* You are expected to engage in each activity, though you should modify physical participation if necessary for health reasons or injuries. In rehearsal portions of class you are expected to observe closely and generously, and to contribute thoughtfully to class discussions on a regular basis. We expect you to be engaged and observant when others are working and to offer feedback to your fellow students when asked.

**Attendance:**

You are allowed three excused absences during this semester. If you must be absent please let us know ahead of time. If you are absent more than three times your overall grade will drop by half a letter grade for each additional absence. If you are late more than twice this will also drop your overall grade by a half letter grade.

**Contacting us:**

Please feel free to email us anytime, but we will not respond to email on the weekends.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students in this class will be expected to uphold the high standards of academic integrity outlined for all NYU students in your handbook. Plagiarism of any kind is strictly prohibited, and will result in a failing grade, and subsequent punitive action by the Gallatin School.

**Schedule:**

- Tues. Sept. 6th – Introductions. Why am I taking this class?

- Thurs. Sept. 8th – Physical Practice & Voice Practice  
  Reading: Breathing packet (handout)

- Tues. Sept. 13th – Physical Practice & Voice Practice  
  Being seen exercise  
  Reading (handout): *Michael McCallion, The Voice Book* Chapter 1 and pp 67-98, 110-111

- Thurs. Sept. 15th – Physical Practice & Voice Practice  
  Reading: Kathryn Armour, Alexander Technique packet (handout)  
  Journal entry #1 – where do I notice myself holding tension?

- Tues. Sept. 20th – Physical Practice
Reading: TED talk, Brene Brown “The Power of Vulnerability”
Essay: “Something I care about.”

Thurs. Sept 22nd – Guest teacher: Zack Fine
Finding the fun!

Tues. Sept 27th — Physical Practice

Thurs. Sept. 29th – Guest teacher: Zack Fine
Finding more fun!

Tues. Oct 4th – Physical Practice

  Ensemble work. Breathing together, listening as a group.
  Reading: Oedipus
  Greek Chorus project
  Journal entry #2 - reflecting on work with Zack Fine.

Tues. Oct 11th – Physical Practice
  Reading: David Foster Wallace, This is Water
  (Annie’s Birthday!)

Thurs. Oct 13th – Greek Chorus projects continued

Tues. Oct 18th – Physical Practice

Thur. Oct 20th -- Filling the space
  Henry V chorus speech

Tues. Oct 25th – Physical Practice

Thurs Oct 27th — Henry V Chorus continued

Tues Nov 1st– Physical Practice
  Reading: The Crucible
  Journal entry #3 – reflecting on chorus work

Thurs. Nov 3rd — What is rehearsal?
  Scene assignments from The Crucible TBD

Tues. Nov 8th – Scene assignments from The Crucible continued
  (Election Day. GO VOTE!)

Thurs Nov. 10th – Rehearsal of The Crucible continued
  Reading: Letters to a Young Poet
Tuesday Nov 15th— Physical Practice

Thurs. Nov. 17th – Rehearsal of The Crucible continued
   Essay 2: Dear Friend (bring two copies, one in an envelope)

Tues. Nov. 22 – Physical Practice

Thurs. Nov 24th—Thanksgiving, no class
   (Jessie’s birthday!)

Tues. Nov 29th — Dear Friend projects
   Journal entry #4

Thurs. Dec 1st – Dear Friend projects continued

Tues. Dec 6th – Final presentations

Thurs. Dec 8th – Final presentations